CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
AND
WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS

FOR

BELL-CARTER OLIVE COMPANY
ORANGE COVE
FRESNO COUNTY

May 2005

CONTENTS

SECTION 1
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. **Project Title:** Bell-Carter Olive Company, Orange Cove, Fresno County

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   California Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Valley Region
   1685 E Street.
   Fresno, CA 93706

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Terrence A. Fox, Associate Engineering Geologist
   (559) 445-6191, CalNet 8-421-6191

4. **Project Location:**
   SE 1/4, Section 23, T15S, R24E, MDB&M

5. **Project Sponser's Name and Address:**
   Bell-Carter Olive Company
   323 First St.; Suite 201
   Woodland, CA 95695

6. **General Plan Designation:**
   Not Applicable

7. **Zoning:**
   Not Applicable

8. **Description of Project:**
   Bell-Carter Olive Company (Bell-Carter) owns an inactive waste disposal unit near the City of Orange Cove in Fresno County. The unit consisted of an impoundment that Bell-Carter used for the disposal of olive brine wastewater. Bell-Carter plans to close the unit in-place by backfilling the waste disposal unit and constructing a geomembrane and asphalt closure cap. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, is proposing to issue Bell-Carter new waste discharge requirements for the closure/post closure maintenance of the waste disposal unit.

   The waste disposal unit is located on the east side of Monson Avenue between East Parlier Avenue and Manning Avenue, approximately one mile southwest of the City of Orange Cove, California. The City of Orange Cove's wastewater treatment facility is located to the west across Monson Avenue.

   The unit encompasses approximately two acres. It is approximately nine feet in depth that includes a berm around the unit approximately three feet above natural grade. There is a chain-link fence around the unit to limit access to the impoundment area. Waste Discharge Requirements 77-006 was adopted in 1977 to regulate up to 100,000 gallons

per year of olive brine to the unit. Wastewater discharge began in 1977 and has been inactive since 1985.

Wastewater discharged to the unit reportedly consisted of saline wastewater brine. A sample collected during an overflow incident indicated an EC of 79,000 µmhos/cm. Sludge samples collected from the bottom of the impoundment contained a maximum EC value of 27,000 µmhos/cm and chloride concentration of 100,000 mg/l.

The Alta East Branch Canal is located approximately ¾ of a mile west of the site and a small irrigation canal is present along the northern and western boundaries. The site is located within the 100-year flood plain. The durability of the proposed asphalt cap construction would prevent washout or erosion. The cap is designed to extend beyond the maximum dimension of the previous surface impoundment, and would thus limit potential infiltration. In addition, the asphalt cap will have a drainage control system to direct run-on and run-off to the irrigation ditch at the western edge of the property.

Background water quality of the shallow groundwater is excellent, with chloride concentrations of 30 mg/L and EC of 550 mg/L. The designated beneficial uses of groundwater, according to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin, Second Edition – 1995* (Basin Plan), includes domestic, municipal, agricultural, industrial services and process supply. Results of site hydrogeologic investigations indicate that brine wastewater migrated from the impoundment, impacting the underlying soil and groundwater, creating or posing a continued threat of pollution or nuisance. Twenty privately owned agricultural and domestic groundwater supply wells are reported to exist within one-half mile of the site. Seven of these wells have been tested and existing data suggests that these water supply wells have not been impacted by operation of the impoundment.

These requirements implement waste disposal unit closure/post closure maintenance and evaluation monitoring. The unit will be closed by backfilling the it and placing a geosynthetic liner and an asphalt cap over the unit. The site is classified as a Class II, non-municipal solid waste landfill in accordance with Title 27.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**
Land surrounding the site to the north, south, and east is used for agriculture. The City of Orange Cove's wastewater treatment facility is located to the west across Monson Avenue.

10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval or participation agreement):**
Fresno County

SECTION 2
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS. Would the projects:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rocks outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?				X
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surrounding?				X
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agriculture Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepare by the California Department of Conservation as optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepare by the Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?				X
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violations? **Dust generation during backfilling of the unit may affect air quality. Construction will have a short duration and appropriate dust control measures can be taken.**			X	
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative threshold for ozone precursors)?				X
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?				X
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGIC RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effects, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local plans, or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the Californai Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services?				X
b) Have substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, ect.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?				X
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				X
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?				X
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?				X
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?				X
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?				X
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X
VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous material?				X
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials site compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildlife fires, including where wild lands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wild lands?				X
VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirement? **The waste disposal unit had leaked high salinity olive brine into the subsurface impacting soil and groundwater. The proposed WDRs contain provisions to close and cap the waste disposal unit which will reduce the potential of high salinity constituents leaching out of the soil and further impacting groundwater.**		X		

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g. the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?				X
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?				X
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of excisting or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?				X
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? **High salinity constituents are present in the soil beneath the unit. The proposed WDRs contain provisions for closing and capping the unit which will reduce the potential for those constituents in soil from further degrading groundwater.**		X		
g) Place housing within the 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows? **The site is located within the 100-year flood hazard area. The existing unit has a berm around it that would redirect flood flows. The proposed WDRs contain provisions for capping the unit and removing the berm. The asphalt cap will have a drainage control system to direct run-on and run-off to the irrigation ditch at the western edge of the property.**			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche,tsunami, or mudflow?				X
IX. LAND USE PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation?				X
X. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. NOISE. Would the project:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?				X
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?				X
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? **Construction equipment used during backfilling of the unit and construction of the asphalt cap will temporarily increase ambient noise levels.**			X	
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. Would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise level?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES:				
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?				X
Police protection?				X
Schools?				X
Parks?				X
Other public facilities?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. RECREATION				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project				
a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)? **Truck traffic will increase during the waste disposal unit backfilling and construction of the cap but will be of a short duration.**			X	
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?				X
c) Result in a change in traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?				X
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?				X
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?				X

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?				X
d) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?				X
XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? **The high salinity of the olive brine previously discharged to the waste disposal unit has degraded the groundwater and soil beneath the unit. The proposed WDRs require the closure and capping of the unit that should prevent further degradation of the groundwater.**		X		

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?				X
c) Does the Project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? **There are water wells downgradient from the site. The presence of olive brine constituents in the groundwater could results in the exposure to humans via drinking water. This potential impact is less than significant because salinity constituents have not reached domestic wells. Closure and capping of the unit will prevent further degradation of the groundwater and groundwater monitoring will monitor the migration of the salinity constituents.**			X	

Section 2 – ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Continued)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significantly Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

Aesthetics	Utilities / Service Systems	Mandatory Findings of Significant
Biological Resources	Agricultural Resources	Air Quality
Hazards & Hazardous Material	Cultural Resources	Geology / Soils
Mineral Resources	Hydrology / Water Quality	Land Use / Planning
Public Services	Noise	Population / Housing
	Recreation	Transportation / Traffic

DETERMINATION. (To be completed by the Lead Agency.)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

X I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project, and a MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect(s) on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets, if the effect is a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated." An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there WILL NOT be a significant effect in this case because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR pursuant to applicable standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project.

_____ _____

Signature **Date**

Loren J. Harlow California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region

Printed Name **For**

SECTION 3
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
PURSUANT TO TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS,
SECTION 15000 ET SEQ.

PROJECT TITLE: Initial Study/Environmental Assessment, Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements for Bell-Carter Olive Company, near Orange Cove, Fresno County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, is proposing to issue waste discharge requirements to Bell-Carter Olive Company for the closure/post closure maintenance of the waste disposal unit at their property near Orange Cove. The unit consisted of an impoundment that Bell-Carter used for the disposal of olive brine wastewater.

The waste disposal unit encompasses approximately two acre. It is approximately nine feet in depth that includes a berm around the unit approximately three feet above natural grade. There is a chain-link fence around the unit to limit access to the impoundment area. Waste Discharge Requirements 77-006 was adopted in 1977 to regulate the discharge of up to 100,000 gallons per year of olive brine to the unit. Wastewater discharge began in 1977 and the impoundment has been inactive since 1985.

Wastewater discharged to the unit reportedly consisted of saline wastewater brine. A sample collected during an overflow incident indicated an EC of 79,000 µmhos/cm. Sludge samples collected from the bottom of the waste disposal unit contained a maximum EC value of 27,000 µmhos/cm and chloride concentration of 100,000 mg/l.

The Alta East Branch Canal is located approximately ¾ of a mile west of the site and a small irrigation canal is present along the northern and western boundaries. The site is located within the 100-year flood plain. The durability of the proposed asphalt cap construction will prevent washout or erosion. The cap is designed to extend beyond the maximum dimension of the previous surface impoundment, and would thus limit potential infiltration. In addition, the asphalt cap will have a drainage control system to direct run-on and run-off to the irrigation ditch at the western edge of the property.

Background water quality of the shallow groundwater is excellent, with chloride concentrations of 30 mg/L and EC of 550 mg/L. The designated beneficial uses of groundwater, according to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin, Second Edition – 1995* (Basin Plan), includes domestic, municipal, agricultural, industrial services and process supply. Results of site hydrogeologic investigations indicate that brine wastewater migrated from the unit, impacting the underlying soil and groundwater, creating or posing a continued threat of pollution or nuisance.

These requirements implement waste disposal unit closure/post closure maintenance and evaluation monitoring. The unit will be closed by backfilling it and placing a geosynthetic liner and an asphalt cap over the unit. The site is classified as a Class II, non-municipal solid waste landfill in accordance with Title 27.

FINDINGS

An Initial Environmental Study was prepared by the staff of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region. The Initial Study describes potential environmental impacts, their significance and mitigation. The conclusion of the study is that the project should not have a significant impact on the environment because any potentially significant impacts will be mitigated as follows:

1. The potential for significant impacts to groundwater quality will be mitigated as follows: the proposed waste discharge requirements require the closure and capping of the waste disposal unit which will preclude further groundwater degradation by inhibiting leaching of salinity constituents in the soil beneath the impoundment into the groundwater.

2. The potential for creation of a potential human health hazard will be mitigated as follows: precluding further groundwater degradation; and monitoring groundwater to insure groundwater plume is not migrating.

Copies of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Initial Environmental Study can be obtained by request to the Regional Board, which is the Lead Agency. Requests should be addressed to:

Terrence A. Fox, Associate Engineering Geologist
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
1685 E Street
Fresno, CA 93706
(559) 445-6191

_____ _____

Loren J. Harlow Date
Assistant Executive Officer
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region - Fresno

SECTION 4
REFERENCES

- *Soil and Groundwater Evaluation,* 2002, Montgomery Watson Harza.

- *Waste Discharge Requirements Order No. 77-006*, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley, 1977.

- *2004 Second Semister Self-Monitoring Report,* 2004, Montgomery Watson Harza.

- *Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin, Second Edition,* 1995*,* California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region.

SECTION 5
DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING

Project Title: Initial Study/Environmental Assessment, Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration, and Tentative Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for Bell-Carter Olive Company, Orange Cove, Fresno County.

Project Description: The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, is proposing to issue waste discharge requirements to Bell-Carter Olive Company for the closure/post closure maintenance of the waste disposal unit at their property near Orange Cove. The unit consisted of an impoundment that Bell-Carter used for disposal of olive brine wastewater.

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Background water quality of the shallow groundwater is excellent, with chloride concentrations of 30 mg/L and EC of 550 mg/L. The designated beneficial uses of groundwater, according to the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Tulare Lake Basin, Second Edition – 1995* (Basin Plan), includes domestic, municipal, agricultural, industrial services and process supply. Results of site hydrogeologic investigations indicate that brine wastewater migrated from the impoundment, impacting the underlying soil and groundwater, creating or posing a continued threat of pollution or nuisance.

These requirements implement waste disposal unit closure/post closure maintenance and evaluation monitoring. The unit will be closed by backfilling it and placing a geosynthetic liner and an asphalt cap over the unit. The site is classified as a Class II, non-municipal solid waste landfill in accordance with Title 27.

Findings of Exemption: The project site is located in an area primarily used for agriculture. The proposed project does involve construction activity during the backfilling and capping of the unit. The proposed cap will be closer to the natural grade than the existing bermed unit. The closed site will generally be maintained as vacant, non-irrigated land, similar to the existing land use. The proposed waste discharge requirements require the closure and capping of the waste disposal unit which will preclude further groundwater degradation by inhibiting leaching of salinity constituents in the soil beneath the unit into the groundwater. The proposed project will not have any potential significant adverse impact, whether individually or cumulatively, on wildlife habitat or endangered species.

Certification: I hereby certify that the public agency has made the above finding and that the project will not individually or cumulatively have an adverse effect on wildlife resources, as defined in Section 711.2 of the Fish and Game Code.

_____ _____

Loren J. Harlow Date
Assistant Executive Officer
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region - Fresno